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Data-driven cortical clustering to provide a family of plausible solutions to the M/EEG inverse problem

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1 MOTIVATION
- Sources are represented as a connected cortical region, rather than a dipole.
- Several separated cortical regions can fit the data with similar accuracy. While convex optimization based methods give a single solution, we explore a family of plausible solutions.
- Estimate not only the position, but also extension range of the regions.

2 ASSUMPTIONS
- Data model: $y = Lx + N$ (L is a lead field).
- Source space: cortical mesh.
- Brain activity $\mathcal{X}$: single region with a constant amplitude over this region; one time sample.

3 METHOD
Adapting hierarchical clustering algorithm [1] to fit M/EEG data:
- Mesh vertices represent initial clusters.
- Mesh edges define the cluster neighborhood.
- Among all inter neighbors clusters, find clusters $C_{i^*}$, $C_{j^*}$ which minimize:
  $$E(i, j) = \min_a \| y - a \cdot (L(c_i) + L(c_j)) \|_2 + R(i, j)$$
- Merge these clusters: $c_k = c_{i^*} \cup c_{j^*}$, $L(c_k) = L(c_{i^*}) + L(c_{j^*})$
- Repeat until the whole cortex is one cluster.
- Cut the tree to obtain separated "growing" regions.
- Select best regions by thresholding data fitting error.

4 RESULTS
- Simulated MEG signal of one active region (in blue) with additive noise.
- Reconstructed with and without regularization. (we regularized region shapes but other alternatives are possible)
- Obtained 3 spatially separated regions which explain the data with high accuracy (with regul.)
- Estimated the extension range of each region.

5 CONCLUSIONS
New approach for the M/EEG inverse problem which:
- Deals with a "growing region" object, which allows to explore space of solutions.
- Gives several candidates for solution and their extension ranges.

Future work:
- Regularization term to be investigated.
- Error thresholding to be investigated.
- Multiple source case by adapting the MUSIC method [2].

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References: